

31, BROOM WATER,

TEDDINGTON, MIDDX.

September 26th, 1961

Professor Z. K. Matthews,
Alice,
Eastern Province,
Cape, South Africa.

Dear Professor Matthews,

Mrs Molly Petersen of Beacon House, Klaarsen's Road, Claremont, Cape Town has written to me to suggest that I should write to you about an idea I discussed with her when I was in South Africa last year as a lecturer at the Natal University Centenary Conference.

There is nothing particularly original in the idea we discussed. It arose from my feeling that, in spite of a great deal of talking about Race Relations by different groups, from different points of view, no authoritative Conference had ever been called together to set out the various factors in the transition of South Africa - indeed Africa as a whole - to happy, healthy, economically viable modern communities.

Back of all the pain and tension and suffering are two main situations. One is the psycho-social situation - getting people related to each other in a purposeful, just, cooperative set of relationships. The other is the economic situation - the development of resources in the service of a common prosperity. The two situations, of course, react on each other.

Each of these two situations has its own laws of constructive development. For example, the psycho-social situation requires that all concerned shall be able to see a way forward for their aspirations; that no section of the community shall be robbed of its sense of value and human dignity by any other section; that every individual shall feel that his opportunities are equal to his potentialities; that each individual, regardless of his particular endowments, shall feel himself to be valued as a person by the society to which he makes his contribution, whatever it may be; that each person and each group may feel a sense of involvement, to the extent of his/their powers, in creating the future, and so on.

The economic situation requires a long-range plan of economic development and a planned mobilization of all the human resources of the community in the service of that plan. In its turn this requires a coordinated system of education and training so that the community, in a climate of free choice of career, shall be equipped to service the general expansion of prosperity.

Although extreme wings of all communities are too emotionally controlled to look at situations and their laws of growth, if the situations and their laws of growth were made plain in a simple and authoritative way, a very large section of the community would be drawn towards cooperation in the common effort.

To present the laws of growth for Africa in a simple, authoritative way, in terms of movement towards greater prosperity for all, seems to me to have been, so far, neglected.

To remedy this defect, hard thinking, careful formulation, and good propaganda are all necessary. My suggestion is that the best first step is for a Conference of national and

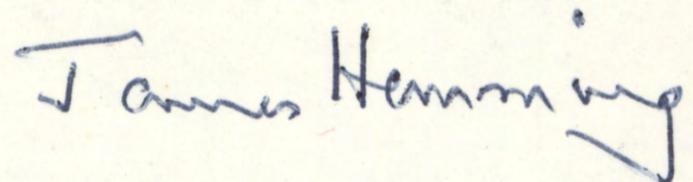
international experts to be called together at University level at which papers would be presented, discussions held, and public lectures conducted so that the laws of action for Africa's most efficient and rapid advance could be shaped and promulgated.

Such a Conference could outflank the outdated and sectarian thinking which is the curse of Africa and give people of all communities, instead, something to look forward to, strive towards, and cooperate about.

The activities and Report of such a Conference could serve as a blue-print for a new beginning in political and social action. It would also offer many growing points for continued work in clarifying the details of planning and action.

I wonder if it would be feasible for a University, or group of Universities, of South Africa to organize such a Conference. Obviously, were it a possibility, the organization would take about two years. But even the knowledge that it was in prospect would, I think, greatly help to hearten people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Hemming". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

James Hemming.